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AUTHOR Heritage, Jeannette
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ABSTRACT

This study involved the third administration of a survey of drug and alcohol use among students at Middle Tennessee State University. The original study was completed in 1977 (N=1,551), the second in 1983 (N=1,198), and the third in 1987 (N=1,535). Findings from the 1987 survey revealed that females and fraternity and sorority members were slightly over-represented in the sample. The results showed that alcohol consumption had remained level since 1977. Responses to alcohol use by parents and high schools friends in 1977 and in 1987 remained consistent. Students living off-campus showed higher use of alcohol and drugs than did students living on-campus or at home. Fraternity and sorority membership appeared to increase alcohol consumption for both genders. Tobacco use decreased significantly between 1977 and 1987. Alcohol use appeared to be related to tobacco use. Use of tobacco products other than cigarettes (snuff, chewing tobacco, cigars) appeared to be a male activity. Marijuana use also declined between 1977 and 1987. Marijuana use, like tobacco use, appeared related to alcohol use. The percent of students who used other drugs remained stable over the three administrations of the survey. In conclusion, it appears that alcohol and drug use at Middle Tennessee State University has changed little in the 10-year period examined, with the most significant changes being reductions in tobacco and marijuana use. (NB)

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TEN YEAR STUDY OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL USAGE AT MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Jeannette Heritage, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology

This is the third administration of a survey of drug and alcohol usage at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU). The original study was completed Fall of 1977 with a subject pool of 1551 students. Classes included in the survey were selected to provide a representative sample of students by college classification and areas of majors. The second survey was conducted in the Spring of 1983 with a subject pool of 1198 students. The third survey was conducted in the Fall of 1987 with a subject pool of 1535 students. MTSU had a student population of 11,975 with 53% females and 47% males. The University is a regional public university located near a large metropolitan area from which it draws about 30% of its students.

The original survey form was modified before the second administration to reflect the usage of T's and Blues in the early 1980's, however, not a single subject marked that item on the third administration. Prior to the 1987 survey an item was added to cover usage of snuff and chewing tobacco. The end of the survey form has a place for comments. These have been typed after each usage and used to improve and clarify the form before the next usage.

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Data was collected by the researcher and student assistants. Letters were sent to selected faculty members asking permission to use one of their classes and was accompanied by a letter from the President of the University approving the study. The administrator of the survey read a prepared statement to the class asking for participation in the anonymous survey and stressing that it was not required. If a student had participated in a previous class they were asked not to fill out another form. Each student was given a form and they were returned to the researcher. Students who chose not to participate or had participated previously handed in blank forms. Blank forms were less than 1%. Most classes had no blank forms returned. The faculty member remained outside the classroom until the survey was completed. Survey forms were scrutinized by the researcher prior to entry on computer forms to detect subjects who were obviously not conscientious in answering (such as smoking 25 joints a day). In the first and third administrations the forms not used were 15 and 17, respectively.

The data were analyzed using a statistical chi-square test, $p < .05$. The data appeared to be a reflection of the student population in classification and school of major. Again, as in the two previous studies, females constituted a larger percentage of the sample (59.4%) than they did of the total student body (52.9%). Fraternity and sorority members were 16.6% of the sample but only 8.4% of the student body

with 7.8% of females and 9.0% of males in Greek organizations. This was true of the previous studies.

Alcohol consumption has remained level since 1977 with some decrease in the No response and a corresponding increase in the Rarely response. For males there was a small change from the Yes response to the Rarely response. Females showed a greater change from the No response to the Rarely response (Table 1).

Responses to alcohol usage of parents and high school friends in 1977 and 1987 has remained consistent with Father's non-use (46%,42.4%), mother's non-use (63%, 57%) showing a slight decrease and usage by high school friends (85%, 87.1%) showing a slight increase, respectively.

Students who lived off-campus when compared to students who lived on-campus or at home continued to show higher usage of alcohol and drugs. Greek (fraternity or sorority) membership appears to increase alcohol consumption for both males and females (Table 1).

The majority of students who drink alcohol had their first drink between the ages of 15 and 17. There was a slight decrease in students who began drinking before age 10 (5.3% vs 3.3%) and an increase in students who began drinking after age 18 (19.2% vs 23.9%). The shift in drinking patterns has been to slightly more who drink less than once a week (49.7% vs. 52.5%) and fewer students who drink three times a week or more (21.1% vs. 15.5%).

Responses to Questions 17-31 were significantly different ($p < .01$) for males and females with males engaging in these alcohol related behaviors more often.

Question 32 asked if there were enough fun, healthy alternatives to drinking on campus. 63.0% said there were and 37.0% said there were not. Females were significantly more positive than males ($p < .001$).

Tobacco usage (18.0%) has dropped significantly since 1977 (28.7%), $p = <.001$. In 1987 73.8% of the smokers smoked less than a pack of cigarettes a day as compared to 68% in 1977. Alcohol usage appears to be related to tobacco usage with only 3.5% of smokers not using alcohol. Use of other tobacco products (snuff, chewing tobacco, cigars) appears to be a male activity (88.8%). Again users of tobacco products appear to be users of alcohol (96.2%).

Marijuana usage (21.6%) has declined since 1977 (29.9%) and 1983 (22.2%). Of the 316 students who marked marijuana usage, 14.8% used daily, 19.3% used on a weekly basis and 52.2% used on a monthly basis and 13.6% did not respond to usage levels. Overall, 3.1% of the total student body admitted to daily use of marijuana, 4.0% weekly use and 10.7% use on a monthly basis. While marijuana usage continues to be sex related in that 26.5% of males smoke marijuana as compared to 18.2% of females ($p = <.001$), the decline since 1977 has been in males. In 1977 the comparable percentages were 39.9% males and 21.1% female.

Marijuana usage like tobacco usage appears to be related to alcohol use. Only 0.9% of marijuana users do not use alcohol. School of major was related to marijuana usage, $p = < .004$. Liberal Arts majors (27.0%) and Basic and Applied majors (25.3%) appear to use marijuana more than Business (19.6%) and Education (15.3%) majors. Classification and Greek membership were not related to marijuana usage.

Percent of students who use drugs other than alcohol, tobacco or marijuana has remained stable over the three administrations of this survey. Table 2 shows results from 1977, 1983 and 1987 for usage by category of drugs, and sex of user. Other Drug use continues to be more of a male behavior than female, $p = <.001$, however, only Cocaine as a category yielded a significant difference, $p = <.001$ with males reporting more usage. No differences were found in classification of students, majors, or Greek Membership. However, only 0.5% of Other Drug users did not use alcohol, $p = < .001$.

Sex differences were found on questions relating to Other Drug usage and behaviors. Males were significantly more likely to have driven while on drugs, smoked dope while driving, missed class because of drugs, gone to class on drugs, thought might have a drug problem, received a lower grade due to use of drugs, and been arrested for drug related offense. No sex differences were found on driving after getting high on drugs, been criticized for using

drugs, been in trouble with the law because of drugs, and overdosing.

CONCLUSIONS

Alcohol and drug usage at Middle Tennessee State University has changed little in ten years. The most significant change has been in a reduction of tobacco and marijuana usage. Overall alcohol consumption has not increased but there appears to be fewer students saying they do not use alcohol and slightly more placing their usage in the rarely category. Students who live off campus appear to be more likely to use alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drugs. This may reflect the feeling of freedom and opportunity to try new or different behaviors. Living on campus, being in a Greek organization and being female continues to show increased tendancy to attend class. Sex differences significant in the 1977 study were not seen as frequently by 1987.

Table 1

Alcohol Consumption

	1977		1983		1987	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	908	58.9	783	65.3	882	59.0
No	296	19.2	144	12.1	214	14.4
Rarely	337	21.9	271	22.6	399	26.6
	1541		1198		1495	
Yes-Males	489	67.5	331	70.0	390	65.2
No-M	107	14.8	44	9.3	87	14.5
Rarely-M	128	17.7	98	20.7	121	20.2
	724		473		598	
Yes-Female	418	51.2	452	62.3	492	54.8
No-F	189	23.2	100	13.8	127	14.2
Rarely-F	209	25.6	173	23.9	278	31.0
	816		725		897	
Greek membership						
Yes-Male	111	86.7	79	79.8	84	80.0
No-M	9	7.0	3	3.0	5	4.8
Rarely-M	8	6.3	17	17.2	16	15.2
	128		99		105	
Yes-Female	71	74.7	97	68.8	103	73.0
No-F	8	8.4	3	2.1	10	7.1
Rarely-F	16	16.8	41	29.1	28	19.9
	95		141		141	

Table 2

Other Drug Usage

	1977		1983		1988	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Q44--use other drugs?	159	10.2	129	10.8	165	10.8
Males	96	13.8	80	16.9	96	16.3
Females	63	7.9	49	6.8	69	7.9
Stimulants	106	6.8	105	8.8	101	6.6
Cocaine	91	5.8	90	7.5	116	7.7
Depressants	79	5.1	61	5.1	41	2.7
Narcotics	34	2.2	34	2.8	33	2.1
Tranquilizers	129	8.3	84	7.0	73	4.8
Hallucinogens	64	4.1	35	2.9	43	2.8

Major_____

M.T.S.U. QUESTIONNAIRE

_____1. What is your classification?
a) Freshman b) Sophomore c) Junior d) Senior e) Graduate

_____2. Sex? a) Male b) Female

_____3. While at school, do you live a) On-campus b) Off-campus c) At home

_____4. Do you belong to a sorority or fraternity? a) Yes b) No

_____5. Does your father use alcohol? a) Yes b) No c) On rare occasions only

_____6. Does your mother use alcohol? a) Yes b) No c) On rare occasions only

_____7. Did friends in high school use alcohol? a) Yes b) No

_____8. Do you ever use alcohol? (If answer is No, skip to question 32)
a) Yes b) No c) On rare occasions only

_____9. At what age did you first drink?
a) Under 10 b) 10-14 c) 15-17 d) 18-20 e) Over 21

____10. What type of drink do you prefer?
a) Beer b) Mixed drinks c) Wine d) Straight liquor e) Combination

____11. How often do you drink? a) Less than once a week b) Once a week
c) Twice a week d) Three times a week e) Four times a week or more

____12. How much beer do you usually consume when drinking beer?
a) One or less b) 2-3 c) 4-5 d) 6 or more e) none

____13. How much wine do you usually consume when drinking wine?
a) 1-2 glasses b) 3-4 glasses c) 5-6 glasses d) More than 6 e) none

____14. How many mixed drinks do you usually consume when drinking mixed drinks?
a) One or less b) 2-3 drinks c) 4-5 drinks d) 6 or more drinks e) none

____15. Why do you drink alcoholic beverages? a) To relax b) To have fun c) To enjoy taste d) For escape e) To get drunk f) It's expected g) Combination of above h) Other

____16. How often do you drink alone? a) Never b) Sometimes c) A lot

PLEASE CHECK THE APPROPRIATE ANSWER: While a student at MTSU, or during the past twelve (12) months, have you ever

Yes	No		
___	___	17.	Driven a car after drinking?
___	___	18.	Had a hangover?
___	___	19.	Been drinking while driving?
___	___	20.	Driven after drinking too much?
___	___	21.	Been nauseated from drinking?
___	___	22.	Missed class because of a hangover?
___	___	23.	Cut class after drinking?
___	___	24.	Gone to class after drinking?
___	___	25.	Been criticized by others for drinking?
___	___	26.	Thought you might have a drinking problem?
___	___	27.	Gotten into a fight after drinking?
___	___	28.	Damaged property after drinking?
___	___	29.	Received a lower grade because of drinking too much?
___	___	30.	Been arrested for DWI?
___	___	31.	Been in trouble with the law because of drinking?